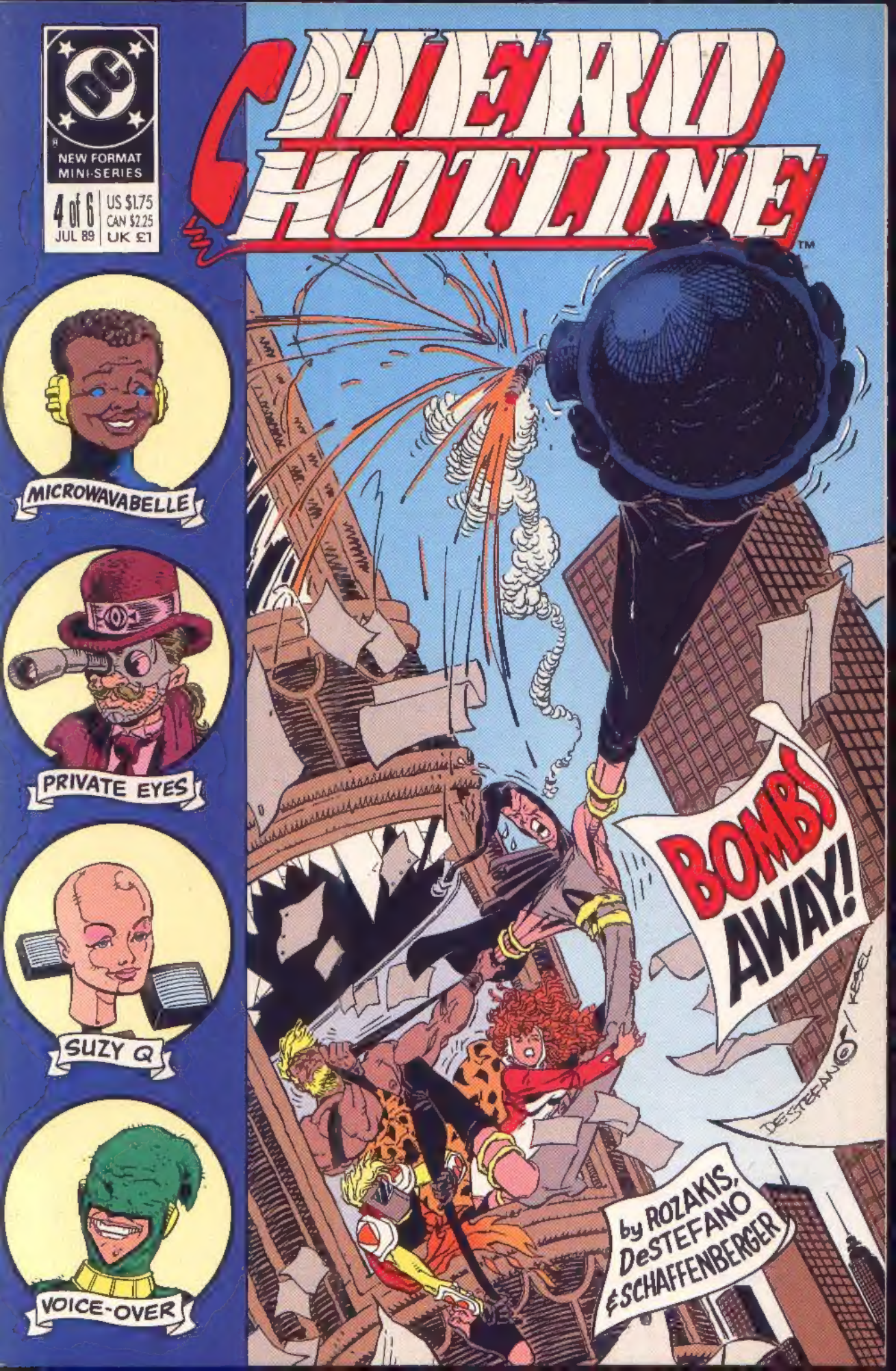
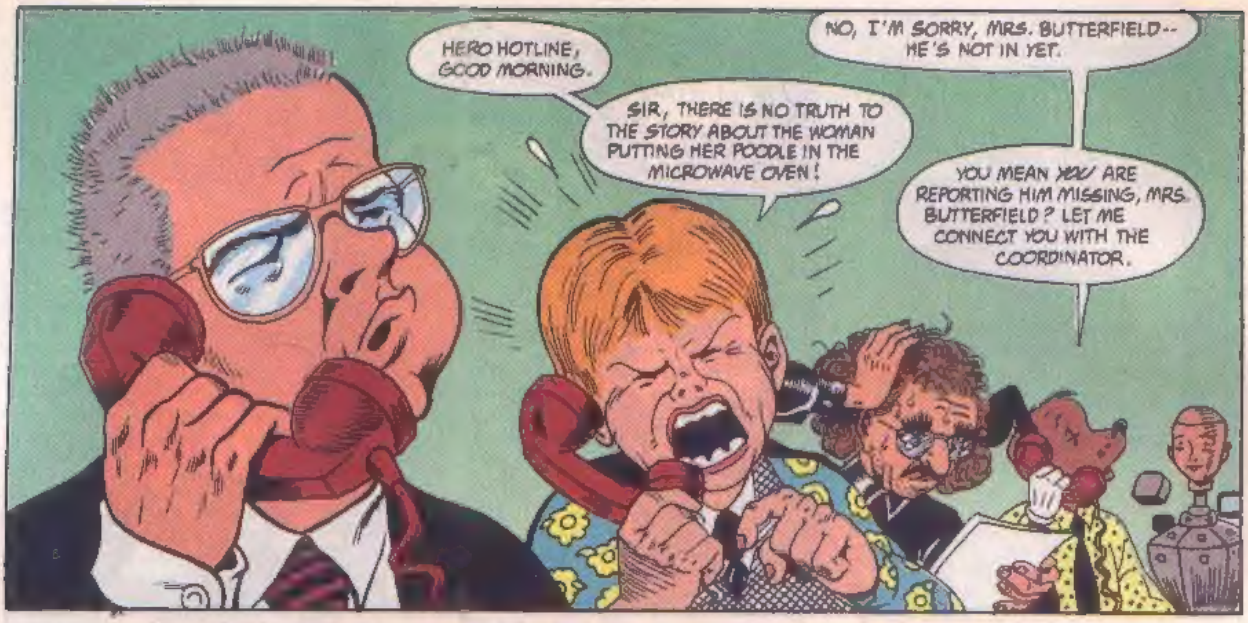
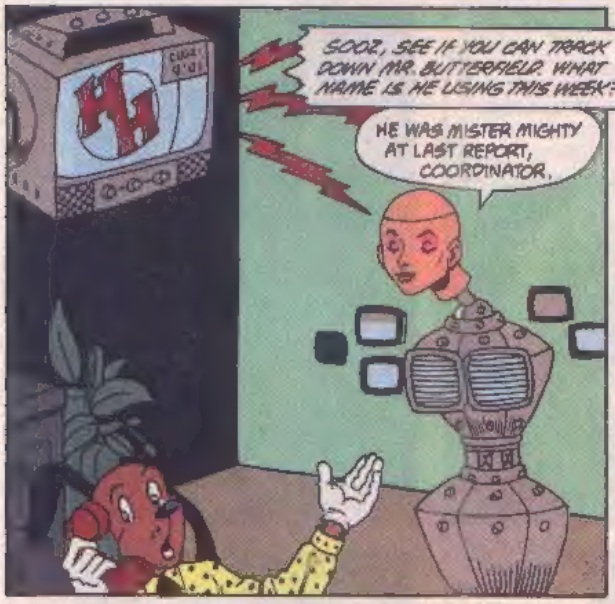
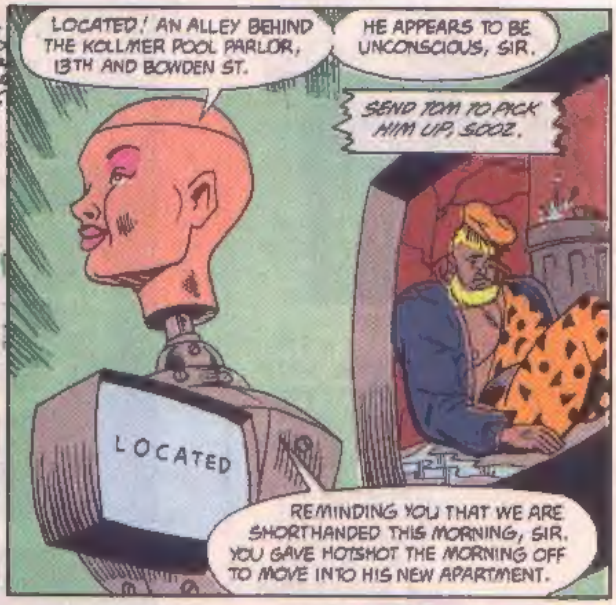

NEW FORMAT
MINI-SERIES
4 of 6
JUL 89
US $1.75
CAN $2.25
UK £1
HERO HOTLINE™
MICROWAVABELLE
PRIVATE EYES
SUZY Q
VOICE-OVER
BOMB AWAY!
by ROZAKIS, DeSTEFANO & SCHAFFENBERGER

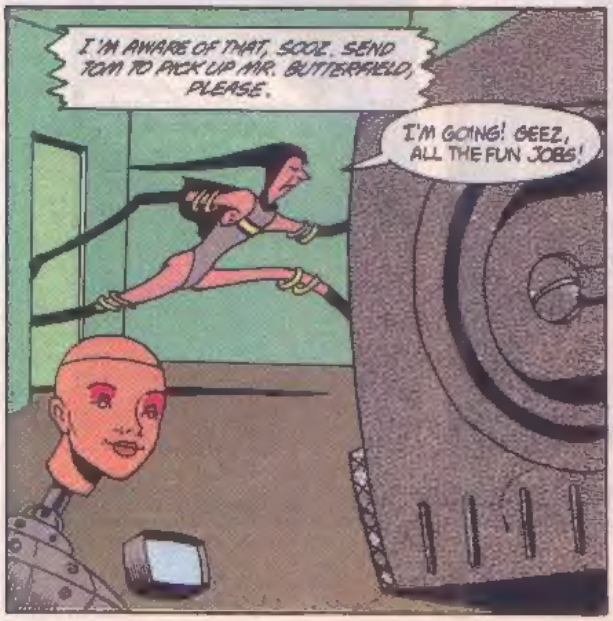
PREVIOUSLY IN HERO HOTLINE...
YEAH, I'LL MEET YOU. WE CAN SETTLE THIS LIKE MEN INSTEAD OF LIKE A COUPLE OF WIMPS LETTIN' TWO LAWYERS PRANCE AROUND A COURTROOM.

HERO HOTLINE 4 Published monthly and Copyright © 1989 DC Comics Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10103. All Rights Reserved. The stories, characters and incidents mentioned in this magazine are entirely fictional. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks of DC Comics Inc. Printed in Canada
DC Comics Inc. A Warner Communications Company


HERO HOTLINE, GOOD MORNING.
SIR, THERE IS NO TRUTH TO THE STORY ABOUT THE WOMAN PUTTING HER POODLE IN THE MICROWAVE OVEN!
NO, I'M SORRY, MRS. BUTTERFIELD-- HE'S NOT IN YET.
YOU MEAN YOU ARE REPORTING HIM MISSING, MRS. BUTTERFIELD? LET ME CONNECT YOU WITH THE COORDINATOR.


SOOZ, SEE IF YOU CAN TRACK DOWN MR. BUTTERFIELD. WHAT NAME IS HE USING THIS WEEK?
HE WAS MISTER MIGHTY AT LAST REPORT, COORDINATOR.


LOCATED! AN ALLEY BEHIND THE KOLLMER POOL PARLOR, 13TH AND BOWDEN ST.
HE APPEARS TO BE UNCONSCIOUS, SIR.
SEND TOM TO PICK HIM UP, SOOZ.
LOCATED
REMINDING YOU THAT WE ARE SHORTHANDED THIS MORNING, SIR. YOU GAVE HOTSHOT THE MORNING OFF TO MOVE INTO HIS NEW APARTMENT.


I'M AWARE OF THAT, SOOZ. SEND TOM TO PICK UP MR. BUTTERFIELD, PLEASE.
I'M GOING! GEEZ, ALL THE FUN JOBS!

AGGH, BILLY-- HOW CAN YOU BEAR TO MOVE INTO A PLACE LIKE THIS? THE GERMS!
MA, THIS IS ALL I CAN AFFORD RIGHT NOW! BESIDES, IT JUST NEEDS A LITTLE CLEANING UP.

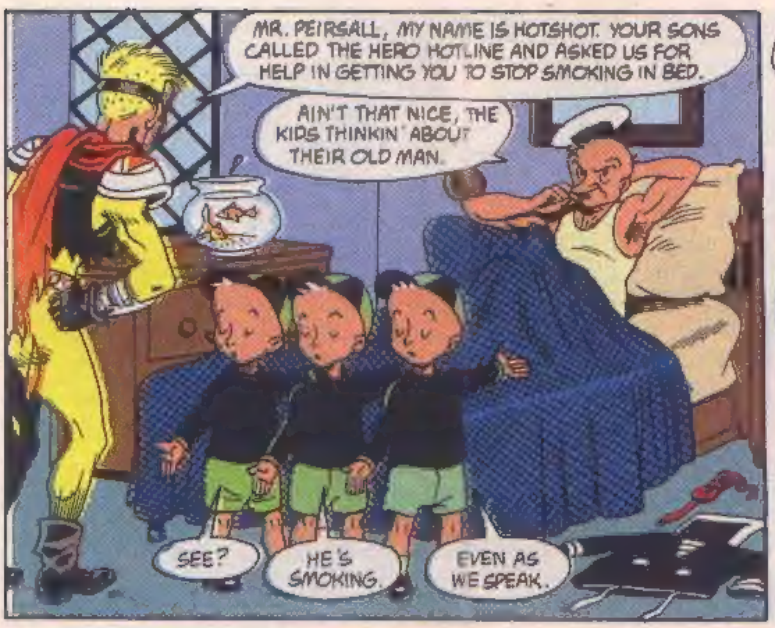
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH LIVING AT HOME, BILLY? ANSWER ME THAT.
I'M EIGHTEEN AND A HALF YEARS OLD, MA. I'VE GOT A JOB. IT'S TIME I MOVED OUT.
BURGER TOWN
TOMMY BARTON IS 24 YEARS OLD. HE'S STILL LIVING AT HOME.
TOMMY BARTON IS A LOSER, MA.
WELL, WHAT ABOUT AMY TINKOWSKY? SHE'S STILL LIVING AT HOME.
WITH HER ILLEGITIMATE KID! MA, I MOVED OUT. THAT DOESN'T MEAN YOU'LL NEVER SEE ME AGAIN!
THEN YOU'RE STILL COMING FOR DINNER?
SURE.
NO!
EVERY NIGHT?
YOU'RE BREAKING YOUR MOTHER'S HEART, WILLIAM.
MA!
SOB! SOB!
GIMME A BREAK, MA. I'VE GOTTA GO TO WORK.
I'LL CALL YOU LATER.
PROMISE?
SIGH: I PROMISE.
SMOK
3

WHAT THE--?!
IS THAT THE GUY?
NAW, THAT AIN'T HIM.
EASY ON THOSE TRIGGER FINGERS, GUYS. I WORK HERE.
HEY, EVERYBODY. GUESS WHO I RAN INTO ON MY WAY TO WORK?
I'LL CUT YOU, YOU PIG.
I'LL BREAK YOU, SONNY!
AH, THE BOYS IN BLUE. DON'T THINK WE NEED THIS MANY OF YOU FOR THIS PIPSQUEAK, THOUGH.
STURGIS BUTTER-FIELD?
YEAH, BUT TRY TO KEEP IT DOWN. I DON'T LIKE PEOPLE KNOWING MY REAL NAME. CALL ME MISTER MIGHTY.
MR. BUTTERFIELD, I'M PLACING YOU UNDER ARREST FOR THE MURDER OF RALPH BARTOLI.
WHAT?!
OW!
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REMAIN SILENT...
DON'T ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS, MR. BUTTERFIELD.
OKAY, BOSS.

OUR ATTORNEY IS ON THE WAY.
AREN'T YOU LISTENING, PAL? OUR ATTORNEY IS ON THE WAY.
CLICK
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO AN ATTORNEY...
WE DON'T NEED THE HANDCUFFS.
LET'S PUT THEM ON. MAKE ME HAPPY.
NO--LET'S MAKE ME HAPPY!
FREEZE, MISTER!
PUT THE GUNS AWAY-- NOW!
DETECTIVE, I DON'T WANT TO SEE ANOTHER GUN PULLED INSIDE THIS BUILDING. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
COOR: 12:1?
MO: BANKS CLOSED TUESDAY FOR JUSTICE SOCIETY FOUNDERS DAY
WE'RE DOING A JOB, SIR.
THIS IS AN OFFICE, DETECTIVE --NOT THE O.K. CORRAL. IF YOU FORGET THAT AGAIN, I'LL BE HAPPY TO HAVE THE COMMISSIONER REMIND YOU.
THAT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT, SIR. I'LL REMEMBER.

MR. BUTTERFIELD, PERHAPS IT WOULD BE BEST IF YOU WENT WITH THESE GENTLEMEN. I'LL ADVISE OUR ATTORNEY TO MEET YOU AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS.
BUT, BOSS. I DIDN'T EVEN TOUCH THE GUY--!
ALL THE MORE REASON TO COOPERATE.
HAHAHA HAHAHA!
AHEM!
COUGH COUGH
COME ALONG, SONNY-BOY.
A life on the prairie is heaven for me...
HEY, LES -- YOU EVER GOING TO TURN THE PAGE?
I DON'T HAVE TO, ANDY.
WISE GUY.
YOU COULD BUY YOUR OWN NEWSPAPER.
1976
DAILY MESSENGER
ALBERTO BEANED BY BIGOTS
BLOOD TEST
Heroes' Journal
WELL, HI THERE, HONEY BUNS!
MELANIE! DIDN'T YOU HAVE AN IMPORTANT APPOINTMENT TODAY?
SURE DID, SWEET LIPS -- WITH YOU! TODAY'S THE DAY WE GET OUR MARRIAGE LICENSE
HOTSHOT -- AN ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU.
DIDN'T WASTE ANY TIME.
THANKS FOR LISTENING, BILLY.
MARX. DAS KAPITAL
A YOUNG MAN CALLED HIS FATHER INSISTS ON SMOKING IN BED. THE COORDINATOR THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO PERSUADE HIM OTHERWISE.
GIVE ME THE ADDRESS AND I'M ON MY WAY.
6

READY FOR LUNCH, ANDY?
WITH TWO LOVELY LADIES? I'M READY FOR LUNCH ANY TIME!
JUST GIVE ME A MINUTE.
MIND IF I COME ALONG, ANDY?
FRED, YOU CAN COME ANYWHERE YOU WANT. NOBODY EVEN NOTICES YOU'RE THERE.
PEEP!
SOMEBODY LET ONE OF THE PEEPS OUT OF ITS CAGE.
KIDNAPPED, SIR?
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE YOU'RE BEING HELD?
PEEP
WORSE THAN THAT. SOMEBODY LET THE MALE INTO THE FEMALE'S CAGE.
LET'S GO, LADIES.
PEEP
HEAR ABOUT YOUR PAL ALBERTO?
SSHH CLIK
HELLO?
PEEP
PEEP
PEEP
PEEP
PEEP

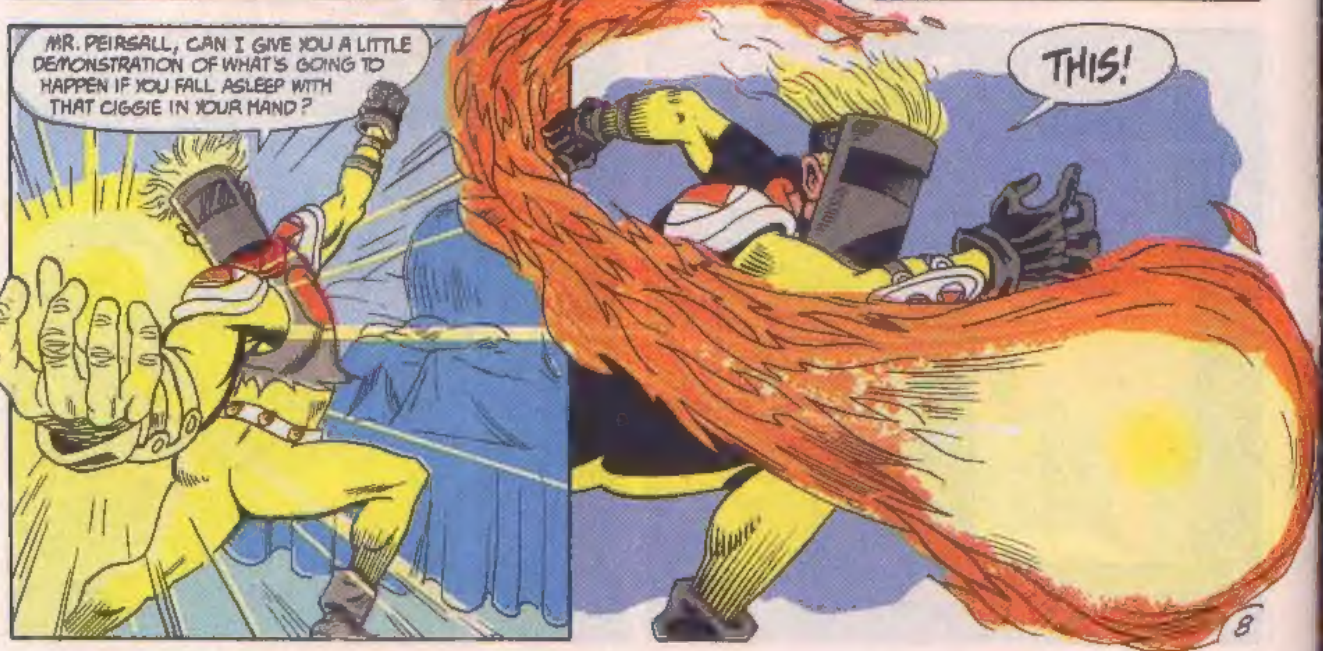

MR. PEIRSALL, MY NAME IS HOTSHOT. YOUR SONS CALLED THE HERO HOTLINE AND ASKED US FOR HELP IN GETTING YOU TO STOP SMOKING IN BED.
AIN'T THAT NICE, THE KIDS THINKIN' ABOUT THEIR OLD MAN.
SEE?
HE'S SMOKING.
EVEN AS WE SPEAK.

WELL, SIR, PERHAPS I COULD EXPLAIN TO YOU THE PROBLEMS THAT MIGHT DEVELOP SHOULD YOU FALL ASLEEP HOLDING A LIT CIGARETTE.

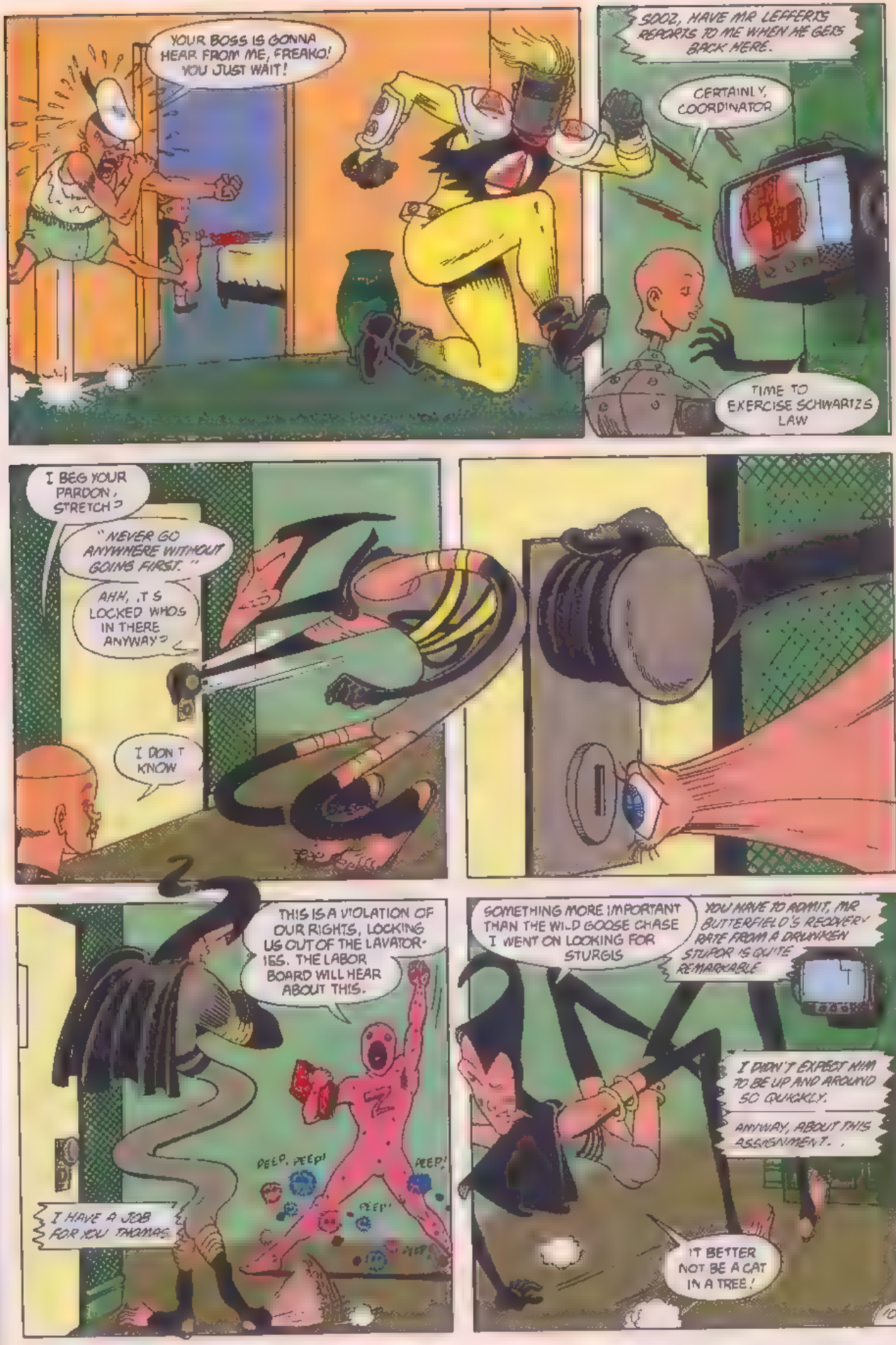
YOU MEAN LIKE I MIGHT SET THE BED ON FIRE?
THAT'S RIGHT.

LISTEN, FELLA, I'M SORRY YOU HAD TO COME OUT HERE, BUT THIS AIN'T NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.
(COFF COFF) FINE, MR. PEIRSALL, BUT COULD YOU DO ME A FAVOR AND PUT OUT THE CIGGIE. THAT WAY MY BOSS'LL THINK I'VE ACCOMPLISHED SOMETHING, Y'KNOW.

TAKE A HIKE! I BEEN UP ALL NIGHT. I NEED MY SLEEP.


MR. PEIRSALL, CAN I GIVE YOU A LITTLE DEMONSTRATION OF WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN IF YOU FALL ASLEEP WITH THAT CIGGIE IN YOUR HAND?
THIS!

YEOOWW!
ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR FREAKIN' MIND?!
STAY CALM. WHERE DO YOU KEEP THE FIRE EXTINGUISHER?
WHAT FIRE EXTINGUISHER?
YOU SMOKE IN BED AND YOU DON'T EVEN HAVE A FIRE EXTINGUISHER?! ARE YOU SUICIDAL OR WHAT?
I NEVER EXPECTED NO COSTUMED LOONEY TO COME IN AND SET MY BED ON FIRE!
WE BOUGHT ONE!
DON'T WORRY, DAD.
WITH OUR ALLOWANCES.
WHAT GOOD KIDS I GOT!
:GLUB:
9


YOUR BOSS IS GONNA HEAR FROM ME, FREAKO! YOU JUST WAIT!
SOOZ, HAVE MR LEFFERTS REPORTS TO ME WHEN HE GETS BACK HERE.
CERTAINLY, COORDINATOR
TIME TO EXERCISE SCHWARTZ'S LAW
I BEG YOUR PARDON, STRETCH?
"NEVER GO ANYWHERE WITHOUT GOING FIRST."
AHH, IT'S LOCKED WHO'S IN THERE ANYWAY?
I DON'T KNOW
THIS IS A VIOLATION OF OUR RIGHTS, LOCKING US OUT OF THE LAVATORIES. THE LABOR BOARD WILL HEAR ABOUT THIS.
PEEP, PEEP!
PEEP!
PEEP!
PEEP!
I HAVE A JOB FOR YOU THOMAS
SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE WILD GOOSE CHASE I WENT ON LOOKING FOR STURGIS
YOU HAVE TO ADMIT, MR BUTTERFIELD'S RECOVERY RATE FROM A DRUNKEN STUPOR IS QUITE REMARKABLE
I DIDN'T EXPECT HIM TO BE UP AND AROUND SO QUICKLY.
ANYWAY, ABOUT THIS ASSIGNMENT...
IT BETTER NOT BE A CAT IN A TREE!
10

IT'S A CAT STUCK IN A DRAINPIPE
OH, WELL, THAT MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE IN THE WORLD!
WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO CUT THIS OUT HARRY? THIS IS BECOMING A RUNNING GAG... A BAD RUNNING GAG!
WE'VE DISCUSSED THIS BEFORE, TOM.
LOOK AT THIS SCRAPBOOK! HAVE I SPENT MY ENTIRE LIFE GETTING CATS OUT OF TREES?
I WAS STRETCHING LONG BEFORE RALPH DIBNY AND PLASTIC MAN EVEN HEARD OF RUBBER BANDS! BUT DO THEY EVER GET CATS OUT OF TREES?
THEY DON'T WORK HERE, TOM. YOU DO.
JUST DO THE JOB WILL YOU, PLEASE!
AHH, THERE'S NO TALKING TO YOU ANY MORE
HOW'RE THE KIDS DOING, BELLE?
WELL, THEY STILL DON'T WANT TO RIDE THE SCHOOL BUS--

--BUT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED, IT'S NOT SURPRISING
EXCUSE ME, FOLKS, HOW IS EVERYTHING?
BEST BURGER I VE EATEN ALL DAY
I'M HAPPY TO HEAR IT COULD I SHOW YOU ALL SOMETHING, PLEASE?
IT'S OUT BACK
HE S GONNA SHOW US WHAT HE MAKES THE BURGERS OUT OF
ANDY
SWEET LORD ABOVE US!
WHAT N THE WORLD?
IT GOT DELIVERED HERE THIS MORNING... BY MISTAKE, I HOPE I THOUGHT MAYBE HE WAS ONE OF YOUR GUYS
GET ME OUT OF HERE!
Yiiiiii!
ANDREW GREENWALD, YOU CUT THAT OUT!
MOI?
12

I THINK WE SHOULD TAKE THIS BACK TO HEADQUARTERS.

C'MON, DI, WE'VE GOT A DUMMY FROZEN IN A BLOCK OF ICE WHAT DO YOU THINK--HE'LL THAW OUT AND WE'LL GIVE HIM A JOB?

NOBODY, COORDINATOR

SOOZ, WE'VE GOT A HOT ASSIGNMENT-- THAT KIDNAP VICTIM'S CALLING AGAIN WHO'S AVAILABLE?

NOBODY?

THEY'RE ALL OUT DO YOU WANT A SCREEN-BY-SCREEN ACCOUNT?

I CAN SEE THEM, SOOZ

GEEZ, THIS THING IS HEAVY. DOES OUR MEDICAL PLAN COVER US IF I GET A HERNIA?

I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND, MA'AM--

WHAT ABOUT FRED?

COOR: 1:47 PM

JSA TRIVIA

Q-WHICH JSA ER HAD CHEROKEE BLOOD ??????

A WILDCAT

YOU KNOW I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO TRACK HIM, SIR

-- WE WANT TO GET MARRIED, NOT OFFER OURSELVES UP FOR VAMPIRE RITUALS'

I'M SORRY, SIR, YOU STILL HAVE TO HAVE A BLOOD TEST. IT'S THE STATE LAW
PLEASE WAIT UNTIL YOU ARE CALLED
PRETTY RIDICULOUS LAW, IF YOU ASK ME.
SIR, I DON'T MAKE THE LAWS. WHY ARE YOU BUSTING MY CHOPS?
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT. SEE THIS? WATCH
SIR, THERE'S NO NEED TO RESORT TO THAT.
YOICKS! THAT SMARTS!
THERE, NOW, MY BLOOD LOOKS JUST FINE
HOLD STILL, MELANIE
GENTLEST HANDS THAT EVER TOUCHED A WOMAN.
HER BLOOD IS FINE, TOO. NOW, JUST GIVE US THE LICENSE, WILL YOU?
WHY DIDN'T I TAKE TODAY OFF?
14

SOOZ TO STRETCH WE'VE RECEIVED A CALL ABOUT A FLYING SAUCER SIGHTING IN YOUR VICINITY DO YOU SEE ANYTHING?
NO, BUT I'LL BET YOU IT'S ME THEY'RE SEEING
PERHAPS PLEASE KEEP AN EYE OUT
YEAH RIGHT
COMING
BUZZ
HIYA, LADY, I'M FROM MEKO NEWSLINE WHAT'S THE STORY WITH THE CAT?
OH, MY POOR LITTLE PUFF WENT OUT THE BEDROOM WINDOW AND WAS WALKING ALONG THE ROOF AND THEN HE SLIPPED AND HE ROLLED DOWN THE ROOF AND THE NEXT THING I KNEW HE WAS STUCK IN THE DRAINPIPE AND...
OKAY, OKAY, OKAY, I GET THE PICTURE
C'MON, PUSS. I KNOW YOU'VE GOTTA BE IN THERE SOMEWHERE
HEY, I THINK I'VE GOT HIM.
YEEEE.
HARRY!
15

LET ME TELL YOU, THIS IS SURE MY IDEA OF HOW TO SPEND A FUN LUNCH HOUR.
HEY, ANDY, HOW ABOUT A LITTLE TEAMWORK HERE?
IN A SECOND, BELLE
WHAT'S THE STORY, SOOZ? RECOGN.ZE THIS GUY?
VISUAL IDENTIFICATION: TEX THOMSON A.K.A. MISTER AMERICA, A.K.A. AMERI-COMMANDO. ACTIVE AS UNDER-COVER AGENT IN EUROPE AND PACIFIC DURING WORLD WAR II...
IT'S NOT THE REAL ONE, SOOZ
THERE HAVE BEEN CASES BEFORE OF PEOPLE SUSPENDED IN BLOCKS OF ICE SIR--
I SAID IT'S NOT THE REAL AMERICOMMANDO, SOOZ. TRUST ME ON THIS, OKAY?
YES S.R
WOOOH THAT BURGER IS NOT SITTING WELL
GROOWWLL
HEY, C'MON--OPEN UP. I NEED IN... RIGHT NOW
ANDY? IS THAT YOU?
FRED! OPEN THE DOOR.

I CAN T ANDY YOU KNOW I CAN'T TOUCH ANYTHING.

THEN HOW'D YOU LOCK YOURSELF IN THERE?

I DON'T KNOW, ANDY. CAN YOU GET ME OUT?

HEY, WHO'S THE GUY STUCK IN THE GIANT ICE CUBE?

NEVER MIND HE CAN TELL ME SOON AS I MELT HIM OUT OF THERE.

HANG ON THERE, BILLY. LET S PUT THAT FLAME TO SOME GOOD USE.

DI, YOU PROMISED YOU WERE GOING TO GIVE UP SMOKING.

I GAVE IT UP. I HAVEN'T HAD ONE SINCE BREAKFAST

SOME DOCTOR YOU'RE GONNA BE

MR. LEFFERTS, BEFORE YOU DO ANYTHING INVOLVING THAT BLOCK OF ICE, I WOULD HOPE YOU'VE LEARNED SOMETHING ABOUT ACTING RASHLY.

WHAT? BECAUSE OF THAT BUSINESS WITH PEIRSALL? YOU SHOULD'VE KNOWN WHAT WAS GONNA HAPPEN, BOSS. YOU SENT ME!

ALL RIGHT, I'LL BITE. HOW DID THIS GUY GET INSIDE THERE? AND WHO IS HE, ANYWAY?
HE'S CALLED THE AMERICOMMANDO
HE'S NOT THE AMERICOMMANDO, MISS THEOTOCOPOULOS
SURE, BOSS
C'MON, FRED, GIVE ME A LITTLE HELP ON YOUR SIDE : OOMPH :
NEXT TIME, SUGAR BUNS, MAKE SURE THE BLADE ISN'T RUSTY!
NO SIGN OF TETANUS YET
HOWDY BELLE WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
WELL, FRED'S LOCKED IN THE MEN'S ROOM AND THE AMERICOMMANDO IS STUCK IN THIS BLOCK OF ICE
HE'S NOT THE --
YEAH, YEAH
HMMM. MISSED ONE SMALL RUST PARTICLE, I THINK
YOICKS!
I SWEAR I'M GONNA GET OUT OF THIS BUSINESS
YOU OWE ME FOR A NEW PAIR OF GLOVES, HARRY YEEE, YOU WOULD'VE THOUGHT THAT WAS A SEWER PIPE AND THAT KITTEN..
COMES WITH THE TERRITORY, TOM
STUFF .T.
plop
18

COORDINATOR, OPERATOR NUMBER THREE REPORTS THE KIDNAP VICTIM IS ON HER LINE RIGHT NOW
HAVE HER PATCH IT THROUGH THE SYSTEM. SOON!
LISTEN UP, PEOPLE --WE'VE GOT A MAN WHO'S BEING HELD CAPTIVE SOMEWHERE BUT DOESN'T KNOW EXACTLY WHERE. PAY ATTENTION AND SEE IF YOU CAN IDENTIFY THE BACKGROUND NOISES, PARTICULARLY THE SCREECHING SOUND THAT SEEMS TO CUT OFF THE CALL
HOW DID HE GET IN THERE
I DON'T KNOW
ROLLED DOWN THE ROOF
LOCKED THE DOOR, BUT I CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW IF HE CAN'T TOUCH THE DOORKNOB.
WHAT KIND OF KIDNAPPERS LEAVE THE VICTIM WITH A TELEPHONE?
CAN WE GET HIM OUT?
GOT TO FIND HIM FIRST!
ALREADY DID. IT WAS DISGUSTING.
MAYBE I CAN BURN THROUGH IT
THE DOOR?
THE ICE!
I'M TALKING ABOUT THE DOOR
I CAN BURN THROUGH THAT TOO, IF YOU WANT!
THERE'S NOBODY IN THERE
SURE THERE IS WE CAN SEE HIM
NOBODY CAN SEE HIM!
I COULDN'T SEE HIM, SO I JUST STUCK MY HAND IN.
IS ANYBODY LISTENING TO THIS?
NO, EVERYBODY'S TOO BUSY TALKING

THERE THE DOOR'S UNLOCKED NOW

THANKS, TOM.

NO PROBLEM, FRED

WHY AREN'T MY FIREBALLS HAVING ANY EFFECT ON THIS ICE ?

WOULD YOU GUYS SHUT UP FOR A MINUTE ? I'M TRYING TO LISTEN TO THE CALL.

HEY, LES. CHECK OUT THIS ICE, WILL YA ?

NTERESTING. SOME KIND OF PLASTIC, TREATED TO LOOK AND FEEL LIKE REAL ICE. OBVIOUSLY WITH A MUCH HIGHER MELTING POINT THAN WATER, HOWEVER.

MOM, MAYBE WE SHOULD GIVE IT THE DOUBLE WHAMMY.

TEAMWORK, BILLY THAT'S WHAT THE BOSS LIKES !

LET ME TAKE A LOOK AT THE AMERICOMMANDO

THEN LETS MAKE HIM HAPPY.

IT'S NOT THE AMERICOMMANDO!
GIVE ME A BREAK GUYS HOLD IT DOWN I CAN'T HEAR!
SO I'VE HEARD
YOICKS!
SOUNDS LIKE TRAFFIC ON A HIGHWAY, BOSS ASK HIM IF HE CAN TELL HOW CLOSE HE IS TO THE ROAD
THERE'S A BOMB INSIDE HIM
HI-YAHHH!
CHOP
TURN OFF THE HEAT! I'LL HANDLE THIS!
SCREEEE

IT'S BEEN ACTIVATED! EVERYBODY HIT THE FLOOR
SOMEBODY OPEN THE WINDOW!
CRASH
THANKS FOR HELPING
BARROOM
22

SEE ANYTHING?
NOPE. BUT I'M SURE WE'LL FIND OUT WHAT IT IS SOON ENOUGH.
MR. BUTTERFIELD, LET'S GO THROUGH THIS ONE MORE TIME.
YOU'VE GONE THROUGH IT SIX TIMES ALREADY, DETECTIVE.
BUT I WANT TO MAKE SURE WE'RE NOT MISSING ANY OF THE DETAILS. I'M SURE YOUR CLIENT UNDERSTANDS THAT, COUNSELOR.
LET'S GET THIS OVER WITH.
NOW, THEN--BARTOLI DARED YOU TO MEET HIM AND SETTLE YOUR DIFFERENCES MAN TO MAN.
RIGHT, BUT--
SO YOU WENT AND, ACCORDING TO YOU, HE SNEAKED UP BEHIND YOU WITH A WRENCH.
RIGHT. THEN I GRABBED IT AND HE RAN AWAY!
SO HOW COME THIS WRENCH WAS USED TO BASH IN BARTOLI'S SKULL AND THE ONLY FINGER-PRINTS ON IT ARE YOURS?
DIDN'T YOU USE THE WRENCH ON BARTOLI? ISN'T THAT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED, BUTTERFIELD?
NO! I TOLD YOU--I NEVER EVEN TOUCHED THAT CHICKEN-PITS!
SURE, MR. BUTTERFIELD.
23

EPILOGUE
NOT BAD FOR A GUY WHO SPENDS ALL HIS TIME RESCUING KITTENS, EH, HARRY?
YOU SAVED A LOT OF LIVES TODAY, TOM.
Klink
WE SHOULD BE MORE CAREFUL WITH BOMBS AROUND HERE.
LESTER SAYS THE SCREECH FROM THE PHONE CALL TRIGGERED THE BOMB, NOT DIANA CUTTING INTO THE "ICE".
WE TRACED THE CALL TO A PHONE BOOTH ON I-80. THERE WAS NOBODY THERE WHEN THE POLICE ARRIVED.
NOT SURPRISING. ANY LEAD ON THE BURGERTOWN GUY?
HE SKIPPED. THE REAL OWNER SAYS THE PLACE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE CLOSED. THE BOARD OF HEALTH ORDERED HIM TO HAVE IT FUMIGATED.
THIS WHOLE THING'S BEEN WELL THOUGHT OUT. ANY IDEAS?
I'VE GOT SOOZ DIGGING THROUGH THE FILES. TILL WE FIND SOME LEADS TO FOLLOW UP ON, WE'VE GOT TO TIGHTEN SECURITY AROUND HERE.
YOU'VE GOT A MORE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM, HARRY.
OH?
PEEP
WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT ALL THESE PEEPS?
HEROES UNION NOW
HERO HOTLINE, GOOD EVENING.
YES, SIR, PEEPS DO MAKE MARVELOUS PETS. HOW MANY DOZEN WOULD YOU LIKE?
HERO HOTLINE
BOB ROZAKIS · STEPHEN DE STEFANO
WRITER · CO-CREATORS · ARTIST
KURT SCHAFFENBERGER · INKER
JOHN COSTANZA · LETTERER
BOB RO · COLORIST
BRIAN AUGUSTYN · EDITOR
24

DC COMICS INC.
666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103

JENETTE KAHN President and Publisher
DICK GIORDANO V.P.-Executive Editor
BRIAN AUGUSTYN Editor
RICHARD BRUNING Art Director
TERRI CUNNINGHAM Mgr.-Editorial Admin.
PAT BASTIENNE Mgr.-Editorial Coordinator
BOB ROZAKIS Production Director
PAUL LEVITZ Executive V.P.
JOE ORLANDO V.P.-Creative Director
BRUCE BRISTOW V.P.-Sales & Marketing
MATT RAGONE Circulation Director
PAT CALDON Controller

Dear Hotliners,

Congratulations on your first issue. The current trend in light-hearted comics inspired by JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL has spawned number of imitators, including your own title. Bob and Stephen kept enough of the winning elements that have made JLI such a success, but they have also molded HERO HOTLINE into more than just a rip-off of your best-selling title.

You may be intrigued to know of a couple of ideas similar to H.H. that are floating around out there (witness Marvel's strikingly similar *Damage Control*). This may astound you, but I, too, conceived of a series much like this one, some years ago. In approximately early 1986, I dreamed of a series that would feature minor heroes performing mostly minor super-heroics, with an occasional true threat. They would have worked out of an agency led by a "director" and it was always my plan that at some dire situation in the future, the director would don a costume of his own to meet the challenge while the other heroes were unavoidably detained. What was the name of my great and (so I thought) original series? H.E.R.O.—Humanoids for Emergency and Rescue Operations—small world, huh? That's all right, I'm not too upset. (Grumble Growl Snarl)

As for your offering, I am suitably impressed with the comic. Number one was as well executed as the (4x7 pages = 28 pages = 1 full comic) preview in ACTION COMICS WEEKLY #637-640. Interesting to note that the preview was written after the first three issues of the mini-series had already been scripted. Bob has created a terrific group of heroes: the solid-as-a-rock Mom, the self-indulgent Private-Eyes, the vain Mr. Muscle, the womanizing Hotshot, Stretch, the cynical veteran, Diamondette, there by necessity's sake, and my personal favorites, the slightly crazed Voice-Over and his mysterious sidekick, Fred (is he or isn't he?).

Then there's Harry, the boss. There might be something of a more serious nature lying behind the facade of the Hotline's leader—notice how his presence is always with the members at all times? Either he's got some major-league mental powers, or Harry's pulling a "1984" on the team. Who watches the watchmen, indeed.

The problem of spouse abuse lent an air of credibility to a generally off-the-wall misadventure. All the same, don't get too bogged down in "social relevancy"—HERO HOTLINE works better in its own slapstick vein.

A "night crew," in addition to our featured cast, eh? I would like to see them occasionally—maybe once for any future mini-series or special—the day-shift seem to be the real stars and the real feature attraction.

Stephen and Kurt's zany visuals enhance the eccentric affairs of these zany characters.

Looking forward to the future exploits of Fred *and* future issues of HERO HOTLINE.

Shane Dammit
Williamsport, MD

Thanks for your positive response, glad to hear that as long as we publish H.H., you'll come back—*Shane.*

Sorry about that.

Anyways, as regards your comments on any similarity the Hotline may share with other titles, there are a few things we should point out. Bob Rozakis's proposal for HERO HOTLINE has been floating around DC for at least three years. Long before even the Justice Leaguers had started their current approach and certainly long before any similar Marvel comic. (Damage Control, *eh? Coincidence or Freudian slip? You be the judge.)*

The fact that all these "similar" ideas co-exist can be chalked up to the incidence of great minds (including your own) thinking alike. Happens all the time—if it didn't, would we have so many smutty afternoon talk-shows to choose from? I think not.

As for the question of whether Fred does or doesn't—simple, he doesn't. His hair is naturally blond. That is *what you meant, isn't it?*

*****

Dear Editor,

I was lukewarm about the "prequel" in ACTION COMICS WEEKLY, but Karl Kesel's eye-popping cover to #1 hooked me into the mini-series.

From the events of #1 and the coming attractions, I assume that HERO HOTLINE exists in the real DC Universe, but in some far-out corner along with such people as Blue Devil and the heroes of the two Justice Leagues. We have Quakemaster—an actual, if minor super-villain—and coming up is Snafu, an old Man-Bat adversary. So we *do* have some doses of reality here.

Maybe not enough, though. Unlike Rozakis and DeStefano's previous creation, 'MAZING MAN, this series doesn't quite have the knack of sneak-punching you with a serious message when you're not looking. There was a trace of what I'm looking for in Mr. Muscle's encounter with the wife beater and in the liquor store suicide in ACTION, though.

Kurt Schaffenberger has been doing this sort of light-hearted stuff for decades; he's a wise addition to the staff.

We have some *okay* silliness here—I'll buy the rest of the series to see if it grows into the kind of *skilled* silliness that immortalized a certain neighborhood in Queens.

Charles D. Brown
Brentwood, NY

The Hotline exists smack-dab in the midst of the DC Universe, as do Blue Devil and the various JLers. I'd like to confirm that with JUSTICE LEAGUE editor Andy Helfer, but he *does exist in a universe other than our own.*

By the way, the cover for H.H. #1 was the handiwork of the "eye-popping" team of Stephen DeStefano and his ol' 'MAZING MAN inker (and Peter Tork look-alike), Karl Kesel. That cover, and, for that matter, all our covers are a sort of reunion of the two talented guys.

*****

Dear Brian, Bob, Stephen, Kurt, and John,

While my initial reaction to HERO HOTLINE was somewhat lukewarm, by the end of the prequel in ACTION COMICS WEEKLY (R.I.P.), I was looking forward to the mini-series. Since you "love to get mail," I thought I'd oblige you with a letter.

"Humorous" super-hero strips are not really my cup of tea; when I picked up JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL #1, I couldn't understand why I was laughing so much. A friend in Virginia recommended 'MAZING MAN, but I read three issues without becoming too enthusiastic. With HERO HOTLINE, the comics were laughing at themselves, it seems, but without much subtlety; however, as Billy became Hotshot and Voice-Over and Microwave Mom dealt with a robber, it became clear that something more than quick and easy yucks was going on. The text in H.H. #1 confirmed it; a lot of thought went into this team and there are foibles (like Dr. Manhattan lost amongst the neutrinos, Lester's super-vision often blurs him to the everyday) and quirks (Diamondette's nicotine addiction, Stretch's desire to be taken seriously, the incom-

parable Fred) galore. None of the heroes on call is perfect, yet they're there when you need them—who could ask for more?

Format-wise, the introduction of the cast was weak, chiefly because it was a *re-introduction* from the prequel, but Belle *was* fair to her colleagues and we had plenty of chances to see them in action. Judging from Mr. Muscle's intervention in the Bartoli household, your approach can take in quite a lot of territory. Mrs. Bartoli was a battered wife and yet she still loved her husband—Mr. Muscle could only do so much for her, the rest has to come from her, once she reads the literature and dials the help number. Belle has a family, Billy has a mother (what would Mrs. Lefferts make of the lovely Di?), and Stretch has a daughter. Sure, it's fun to play at ring-rescuing and Quakemaster quashing, but you're trying to do more, e.g., the Miranda warning for Quakemaster and Stretch's anger over the villain's attitude, etc.—I think you'll have something special here, should you tap all the series' potential.

I'm optimistic enough to dial 1-800-555-HERO ($1.75 the first issue, $1.75 each issue after) in the following months. Hey, who needs Ghostbusters?

Charles J. Sperling
Flushing, NY

Just a guess: Sigourney Weaver?

*****

Dear Coordinator,

I have been a fan of the Rozakis/DeStefano team-up since 'MAZING MAN and I have a few questions:

1) What's the story on Snafu?

2) Will we ever learn who the Coordinator is?

3) Will we ever see Hotshot's face?

4) Will Mr. Muscle ever decide on one name?

5) Will Hotshot finally get so PO'd that he fries his mom?

Just wondering,
Matt Schuster
Fargo, ND

P.S. When's the next 'MAZING MAN SFECIAL?

1) The story on Snafu was in issue three.

2) Maybe, maybe not.

3) How about in this *issue?*

4) One name at a time *would be a breakthrough.*

5) No.

P.S. Time alone will tell.

*****

Dear Mr. Augustyn,

Just a quick note to give you my thoughts on your newest title, the HERO HOTLINE limited series.

Are you kidding!?

As a concept, it's not the worst thing DC's ever come up with. Played right it could even actually be quite funny. God knows that Bob and Stephen have come up with some wonderfully silly characters to populate the book with.

I'm not sure, however, that it's wise to place it within the mainstream DC Universe. I realize it's not often healthy to take our characters *too* seriously—a little bit of fun at their expense from time to time can't hurt—but I would prefer that such "fun" stories take place outside of continuity, much as the AMBUSH BUG series did. I find myself wondering, as I pore over the first issue of the series, if the way Quakemaster was handled will now be the established norm for him. Will he never face Batman again, because he's now too much of a bozo to fit into the Batman image? Will the same thing happen to the Calculator and Snafu when they appear later in this book's run? I sincerely hope not.

This, put plainly, is the main problem I have with the book. If it wasn't for my misgivings in that department, I'd have no problem in appreciating the more humorous aspects of the strip and giving it the support it deserves. Bob and Stephen have come up with something that, in the same other-dimension that 'Mazing Man exists in, could be quite wonderful. But it doesn't deserve to be in the same universe as the rest of the DC crowd, and I'd wish you'd consider removing it from same.

Therefore, even as I assure you that I'll be collecting the whole series, I ask you to do a one-shot special, after the mini-series is finished, that crosses over with Ambush Bug. This, in turn, will make it clear that HERO HOTLINE exists on Earth-Bug, for lack of a better term, and is *not* part of the main DC continuity. It would make me very happy.

If you're not going to do that, then at least reassure me that the shenanigans of this series aren't going to become business as usual for any DC villains that appear here. Y'see, I'm an old villains nut and they get so little respect as it is...

David Peattie
Concord, CA

You don't like the fact that HERO HOTLINE takes place in the DC Universe? Then ignore that part of it. Fantasy is exactly that easy; don't let things get in the way of your enjoyment of a comic book.

Besides, the three villains you mention are not exactly the most easily respected, dignified guys to start with. I mean, how could you ever take Quakemaster that seriously?!

By the way, Quakemaster, Snafu, and The Calculator were all created by Bob Rozakis, so if anyone has the right...

I'm not even going to ask what you meant by HERO HOTLINE's not deserving *to be part of the mainstream DC Universe. Lighten up.*

*****

Dear Hero Hotline,

The only reason I bought #1 was that Wonder Woman, Batman, and Superman were on the cover.

Sincerely,
Ed Crespo
New York, NY

Gotcha!!

*****

NEXT ISSUE: More of all of this, new stuff and another nifty recap page. Don't miss it; we won't. Don't forget to write and tell us what you think of H.H., hokay?

See you in thirty. Oh, and let's be careful out there.

—Brian Augustyn